

to the inadequacy with which pastors are sustained. This is true in relation to financial matters : but we allude more particularly to the moral support that is given to ministers. It is not infrequently the case that a pastor is called upon to bear the whole burden of a church both in its religious services and its business management. Instead of finding an Aaron and a Hur to uphold his trembling hands, he too often finds a Nadab and an Abihu offering strange fire and rendering nugatory what little influence for good he has endeavoured to exert. As a result of this, both the character and office of the christian minister are by many held in light esteem, and ministerial itineracy is becoming as common as that of the troubadours or minstrels of by-gone days who roamed about from place to place singing songs and telling stories for the purpose of obtaining their daily bread. It is not our intention in these remarks to exonerate pastors in the slightest degree from any blame of which they may be justly deserving ; but we aim to show that they are not entitled to a monopoly of that blame which is generally placed exclusively upon their shoulders.

#### THE REMEDY SUGGESTED

The speedy and entire removal of these causes of declension is the important and practical matter which demands our best wisdom and most earnest prayers.

*How may a better state of things be brought about ?*

The reply to this question has been to some extent anticipated by the foregoing considerations.

It is obvious that personal holiness must necessarily receive our first attention. Unless our hearts are filled with love to Christ it will be folly to expect either enjoyment or success in our religious efforts. To how many churches and individuals might be addressed the withering rebuke : " I know thy works that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead ! " We need the constant presence and guiding influence of the Holy Spirit. Our sufficiency is of God, and nothing of permanent benefit or value can be accomplished without His gracious assistance. The voice of the Master is heard to-day uttering the solemn injunction to each of the churches : " Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works ; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. "

It is also necessary that, as members of the church of Christ, we should have just conceptions of the duties and responsibilities which belong to this relationship. We are not called to a life of idleness, but to one of constant activity and self-sacrifice. The more clearly we understand the glorious mission of the church on earth, the more grateful we feel for the honor we have received in being permitted to participate in its blessings and share in its toils, and the more zealously we labor to secure its universal extension. Saved ourselves, the chief joy of our lives will be to become instrumental in the salvation of others. To this end our fervent prayers will often ascend